

The stock market opened dull this morning. Quotations were not very much changed from the previous day. The market was not very much changed from the previous day. The market was not very much changed from the previous day.

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The establishment of a Court of Claims. The investigation of claims against the United States, whilst it will not, in any instance, advance the course of justice in the settlement of debts due by the federal government, either in law or equity, will have the effect, so far as the poor claimant is concerned, of practically defeating his pursuit altogether. According to the rules of the court, just promulgated, the expenses of prosecuting a claim will be very large; even greater than in an ordinary court of justice; whilst the decision of the court, when arrived at, amounts to nothing more than a mere report to Congress, either favorable or otherwise, to be acted upon by that body afterwards, precisely as the reports of the Committee on Claims have been heretofore.

But there is this difference between the newly established court and the former Committee on Claims—that now a vast deal of formality has to be gone through with, a large expense has to be incurred, and evidence has to be produced according to law, or it will be rejected. Heretofore, the object of an investigation by committee was to obtain all the information of any character which could be procured; and this was done without cost to the claimant, it being the duty of the departments to furnish all the facts in their possession, and of the members of the committee to procure such facts and report upon them.

By the rules of the "Court of Claims," the applicant will be compelled to pay the commissioner before whom he must appear, five dollars a day as his fees, and twenty cents for every hundred words contained in the depositions. He must also pay the fees of witnesses for travel and attendance—the fees for serving summonses, and all the incidental expenses attendant upon courts. After having gone through these proceedings, his case is sent to Washington, to be acted upon by the commissioners, either by counsel or in person, and wait the rules of the Judges. We do not think the rules of the Court have exceeded the powers conferred by the act establishing it. The defects are in the act itself, which is as crude a piece of legislation as ever occupied a position on the statute books. It does not reach the evils existing in the way of the claimants against the government, while it renders the prosecution of such claims more difficult and expensive than heretofore. The act has still finally to act upon all claims not allowed by the departments, and whatever corruption or abuse existed previous to the passage of this act, in the legislation of either branch, remains intact. The only benefit arising will be in the increase of federal patronage, already too large, and in the quantity of printing which will be required, and which will fall of course to the support of some padded organ in Washington.

There is but one method by which Congress can remedy the abuses which now exist in the prosecution of claims against the United States, and at the same time afford a proper and just relief to claimants. As the United States have no existence as a political ideal being, except under the organization of the constitution and federal laws, it is assumed as a principle, arising from the sovereignty of the United States, that the property of the government are not subject to suits for acts in the regular discharge of their official duties. A person, therefore, having a claim against the government cannot bring a head of department or any other federal officer into court in case of the refusal to settle the claim. Under the existing laws, no satisfaction can be had except by recourse to Congress, in the shape of a petition for relief, and in this state of facts lies all the difficulty. A large number of claims are such as would be allowed at once could recourse be had to the courts of law. A direct suit against the United States cannot be maintained without the authority of an act of Congress; but by the passage of an act giving such power, all difficulty would be obviated. True, there are cases which could not be established in a court of justice, being more in the nature of gifts than indebtedness, strictly speaking; and there are the claimants might be disposed of by Congress without impeding their legitimate duties.

An examination of the records of Congress will show that hundreds of claims have been reported upon favorably by committees of both houses, placed upon the private calendar, and allowed to sleep in quiet, whilst the claimant, worn out by anxiety, hopes deferred, and, in many instances, poverty, sleeps no less quietly in the grave. We have seen the claimants, and not even in the briefest experience, poor claimants hanging about the halls of Congress, with threadbare garments, pallid faces, and lustreless eyes, in the vain expectation that their claims would be reached, till nature at length releases them from their sufferings, and their dry prospects are ended? What relief